

Serial No.: 09/333,520

Docket No.: 1293.1071

REMARKS**INTRODUCTION:**

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 4, 5 and 9 have been amended, and claims 2, 7 and 59 have been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer.

Reconsideration of the allowability of the claims is respectfully requested.

Claims 4-6, 9, 48, 49 and 52-58 are pending and under consideration.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103:

Claims 4 and 52-54 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Ro et al., U.S. Patent 6,288,989, in view of Furukawa, U.S. Patent 5,315,578, and Takahashi, U.S. Patent 5,878,020. Claims 5-6, 48, 55 and 56 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Ro et al., Furukawa, and Takahashi. Claims 9, 49 and 57-58 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over Ro et al., Furukawa, and Takahashi. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

In the interview conducted May 7, 2003, the Examiner suggested that the independent claims be amended to clearly detail that the redundantly stored information was not stored in different stages of operation. According to the Examiner, Ro et al. was being interpreted as recording passwords, with each password being stored in a different recording operation or stage. The present specification clearly evidences that the storing of the redundant write protection information is performed in the same stage or operation (or at the same time). Thus, it was agreed that at least this feature differentiated the independent claims from the cited references, and would overcome the outstanding rejections.

The independent claims were further amended to define that the recording medium would be indicative of a write protected recording medium (write protection state) when write protection information read, without error, from one location, matched write protection information read, without error, from another location. It was agreed in the interview with the Examiner that this feature also similarly differentiated the independent claims from the cited references, and overcame the outstanding rejections.

As explained in the interview, the presently claimed invention differentiates itself from the prior art by performing an extra level of verification to determine whether a recording medium is write protected. While some systems may store data twice or three times, they perform this

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redundant recording in case one of the stored data cannot be read. In that case, the next stored data would be read, and if the next stored data cannot be read, then the third redundantly stored data would be read. By storing data redundantly, such systems would be assured that at least one of the stored data could be read.

However, the presently claimed invention provides for an additional level of verification. By matching at least two redundantly stored write protection information, a more precise write protection state can be accomplished. In one example, if for some reason the first write protection information cannot be read, and the write protection state of a recording medium is changed, then only the remaining second through fourth write protection information would be changed. Later, when the obstruction on the first write protection information, e.g., a dust particle, is removed the recording medium would incorrectly indicate both write protection and non-write protection, i.e., the write protection indication of the first write protection information would be different from the second through the fourth write protection information. The system in such a situation may cease operation since it cannot be clearly determined the write protection state of the recording medium. However, the extra level of verification provided by the presently claimed invention allows for such irregularities by determining if at least two of the write protection information match, and use that matching indication be the indicator for the write protection of the recording medium.

Therefore, for at least the above, it is respectfully requested that the outstanding rejections be withdrawn and the pending claims be allowed.

CONCLUSION:

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

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If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date:

5/22/03

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~~CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR 1.8(a)~~

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks, Washington, D.C. 20231

on 5/22/03, 20____
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